

MONTANA UPDATE

Montana Department of Commerce

Volume 17 • Issue 3 • March 2006

Find What You're Looking For

At the 2006 Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation

Interested in Montana and regional travel trends? Is community and cultural tourism development your desire? Asking how to get the most from your marketing budget? Looking for Montana-made products and foods to sell visitors? If these questions are yours or your interest focuses on strengthening Montana through tourism and recreation, then register for the April 10-11 Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation at Great Falls' Best Western Heritage Inn.

Everything you need is available at www.travelmontana.mt.gov/conference. The \$120 registration fee is offered through March 31. It goes to \$140 through April 7, and \$160 at the door. Sponsorships and exhibitor space are also available.

Three national tourism experts open the conference's morning sessions.

Monday, April 10:

- Creating a Competitive Economic Advantage Through Tourism
- National & Regional Travel & Demographic Trends: Implications for Montana Tourism

Tuesday, April 11:

- Seven Immutable Rules of Successful Tourism

Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning, concurrent sessions cover a variety of topics, including, but not limited to:

- Getting Maximum Return For Your Marketing Dollars
- The Creative Arts: Four Steps to Cultural Tourism
- Responding Profitably to Travel & Demographic Trends
- Customer-Centered Salesmanship (New material from Montana Superhost)

- Montana Tribal Tourism Alliance 2006 & Beyond Strategic Plan

- Putting Montana on Your Table/Shelf

- Going-to-the-Sun Road and Beartooth Highway Updates

Tuesday afternoon, 5 field trips are offered (pre-registration required):

- Relive-Play-Create-Explore: Great Falls Museums Tour
- THE Great Falls of the Missouri & Rivers Edge Trail Tour
- Exploring Ulm Pishkun State Park
- Historic Fort Benton Tour
- Great Falls Trolley Historic Tours

Governor Schweitzer will be addressing the conference at the Tuesday luncheon.

The conference concludes Tuesday night with statewide tourism award presentations.

Register now. See you in Great Falls!

Made in Montana Makes New Strides

The City of Great Falls has joined forces with the Montana Department of Commerce and the Montana Department of Agriculture to bring forth a newly reinvigorated Made in Montana Marketplace to be held in Great Falls March 10 & 11, 2006. The show provides a perfect opportunity for tourism businesses that have gifts shops to purchase products directly from Montana vendors. Friday, March 10 is set-aside for wholesale buyers only while Saturday, March 11 is

open to both the public and wholesale buyers. For more information on the trade show, contact Lonie Stimac at 841-2783 or lstimac@mt.gov.



Stop the Press!

Hot off the press is Travel Montana's newest publication, the *Montana Vacation Planner*. This new guide incorporates information from the previous publications, the *Montana Vacation Guide* and *Travel Planner*, into a



glossy, easy-to-read format that boasts the best of Montana. It features 166 full-color pages with new design layout highlighting adventure and wildlife, history and culture, fun facts and Lewis and Clark information. Expanded sections include towns and attractions, major ongoing events and Indian nations. The "Find What You're Looking For" GPS design utilizes the same branding efforts used in Travel Montana's national advertising campaign. Find what you're looking for in the new *Vacation Planner*!

ABA Leads Available

More than 600 American Bus Association (ABA) operators from the United States and Canada gathered recently in Nashville, TN for the annual ABA convention. Marlee Iverson of Travel Montana had 27 scheduled appointments with tour operators. New this year was a chance to win a "Hot Ticket" for some of the sponsored events. Marlee won a reserved table up front and center during the Branson-sponsored luncheon. She took the opportunity to invite five VIP tour operators as well as the other members of the Montana delegation. It was a special treat to network with the operators and to

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be upfront for stars such as Pam Tillis and the Oakridge Boys! Leads from this event are at www.travelmontana.state.mt.us/ourprograms/groups. This is a password-protected page, so if you have not already received your password, please contact Marlee at 841-2985 or miverson@mt.gov.



On the Big Screen

The Montana Film Office was a sponsor of the 3rd Annual Big Sky Documentary Film Festival in Missoula. This February, 96 outstanding non-fiction films from 28 countries lit up the Wilma Theater. These films were selected from over 800 entries received. The Festival featured seven days of screenings, panel discussions, filmmaker Q&A and public and VIP events. Three separate competitions

for Best Documentary Feature, Best Documentary Short and the Big Sky Award were held as part of the Festival. The Montana Film Office sponsored an evening reception for filmmakers and co-sponsored a "Green Room" during the festival, which provided filmmakers, press, judges, and All Access Pass holders a setting for networking, receptions and private screenings.

2006 TIIP Grant Applications Available

The 2006 Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) Grant application materials are now available. The application form, guidelines, frequently asked questions and TIIP Grant Award Summary are at www.travelmontana.mt.gov/ourprograms/TourismDevEd.asp. Hard copies can be requested by contacting Victor Bjornberg at 841-2795 or vbjornberg@mt.gov.

TIIP Grants invest a portion of Travel Montana's tourism "bed tax" funds into new non-profit operated tourism-related attractions, the enhancement of existing

tourism facilities and the preservation of Montana's historical and cultural treasures. Since its creation in 1995, TIIP has invested more than \$2.2 million "bed tax" funds into 49 projects in 33 Montana communities. This investment has helped create over \$29 million in new or improved tourism facilities in Montana.

The deadline for submitting 2006 TIIP Grant Applications is August 1, 2006. The amount of grant funds available in 2006 will be set in June, but is expected to be \$200,000.



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Calendar of Events:

March

- 4-7 Sales trainings—Paris, France
- 4-8 Bank Travel Conference—Mobile, AL
- 7-II ITB trade show—Berlin, Germany
- 10-II Made in Montana Marketplace—Great Falls, MT
- 9-II Museum Association of Montana Conference—Fort Benton, MT
- 13 CTAP Meeting—Cooke City
- 14 CTAP Meeting—Butte
- 17 Tourism Awards Deadline
- 22-26 National Tour Association (NTA) Spring Meet—Louisville, KY
- 30-4/I RMI Round-Up—Butte, MT

For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to:
travelmontana.mt.gov

Did You Know?

- As of this past fall, the National Park Service (NPS) has hired former Executive Director of Utah's Division of Travel Development Dean Reeder to head the NPS Office of Tourism.
- The *Montana Update* is going electronic. Please send your updated email address, along with name and business name to TMUpdate@mt.gov.
- Ride Guide Television hosted a Canadian TV film crew for a 10-day ski safari through Montana. Their show, featuring Big Mountain, Turner Mountain, Lost Trail and Moonlight, will air as a thirty-minute episode in late February 2006. In addition to being broadcast from coast to coast in Canada (on four different networks), the episode will also play again next fall in UK and other European markets.
- The February 2006 *Budget Travel* magazine featured great value oriented skiing in Montana — Lost Trail and Bridger Bowl.
- The Beartooth Highway was named one of the World's 10 Best Road Trips in Australia's, *Sydney Morning Herald*.



Travel Montana • Montana Film Office
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